

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KINSHA 07127 251315Z

43

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INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 7127

LIMDIS

LUSAKA PLEASE PASS ASST SEC SCHAUFELLE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CG, AO, PFOR

SUBJECT: ZAIRE-ANGOLAN RELATIONS

1. DURING MEETING AUGUST 24 FOREIGN MINISTER MGUZA FILLED ME IN ON SUBSTANCE OF HIS TWO-HOUR TALK WITH NETO AT COLOMBO LAST WEEK. NGUZA SAID NETO HAD TAKEN THE INITIATIVE IN SETTING UP MEETING AND HAD DONE MOST OF THE TALKING. NETO HAD TAKEN GENERALLY CONCILIATORY LINE, PARTICULARLY IN RESPONSE TO NGUZA'S COMPLAINT THAT MPLA CONTINUED TO ACCUSE ZAIRE OF SUPPORTING ARMED ACTIVITY ALONG ANGOLAN BORDER EVEN AFTER GOZ HAD GIVEN PUBLIC ASSURANCES IT WOULD NOT TOLERATE SUCH ACTIVITY. NETO, FOR HIS PART, SOLEMNLY SWORE THAT ANGOLA WOULD NOT ATTACK ZAIRE. PRESSED ON THE QUESTION OF KATANGAN GENDARMES STILL IN ANGOLA, NETO HAD PROTESTED THAT THEY REFUSED TO RETURN TO ZAIRE, FEARING GOZ OFFER OF AMNESTY WOULD TURN OUT TO BE A RUSE. NGUZA SAID HE HAD TAKEN NETO TO TASK ON THIS ISSUE, NOTING THAT ANGOLANS HAD IN FACT ENCOURAGED KATANGANS TO STAY AND HAD INCLUDED THEM IN ANGOLAN ARMY. IT SEEMS EVIDENT THAT KATANGANS REMAIN VERY MUCH ON GOZ'S MIND AND THAT MATTER HAS YET TO BE RESOLVED.

2. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY, NGUZA SAID NETO HAD NOT CONFIRMED
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 KINSHA 07127 251315Z

ANY SPECIFIC PLANS FOR WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN TROOPS FROM ANGOLA.

ON THE CONTRARY, NETO INDICATED THAT CUBANS WOULD BE NEEDED FOR SOME TIME TO TRAIN ANGOLANS TO USE SOPHISTICATED MILITARY WEAPONS. EVEN AFTER THAT WAS ACCOMPLISHED, NETO HAD SAID, SOME CUBAN FORCES WOULD STILL BE REQUIRED IN VIEW OF THE "CONTINUING THREAT FROM SOUTH AFRICA".

3. NETO HAD SAID THE BENGUELA RAILROAD WAS OPERATIVE EXCEPT FOR REPAIRS WHICH ARE CONTINUING ON THE BRIDGE AT DILOLO, ON THE ZAIRIAN BORDER IN THE EAST. HE HAD TOLD NGUZA THAT THIS WORK SHOULD BE FINISHED BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER, AT WHICH TIME THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT WOULD OPEN THE RAILROAD FOR ZAIRIAN TRAFFIC INCLUDING THE RETURN OF A QUANTITY OF ZAIRIAN-OWNED ROLLING STOCK BLOCKED IN ANGOLA FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. NETO HAD ADMITTED THAT SECURITY AGAINST UNITA ATTACKS ON THE LINE REMAINS SOMETHING OF A PROBLEM, ALTHOUGH HE APPARENTLY DID NOT BELIEVE THIS WOULD SERIOUSLY INHIBIT MOST TRAFFIC.

4. NGUZA INDICATED HE AND NETO HAD DISCUSSED BUT NOT REACHED FINAL AGREEMENT ON IMPLEMENTING LAST JUNE'S DECISION TO ESTABLISH LIAISON OFFICES IN LUANDA AND KINSHASA. HE SAID THE ANGOLANS APPEARED RELUCTANT TO ACCORD ZAIRE SUCH A MEANS TO MONITOR FIRST-HAND DEVELOPMENTS INSIDE ANGOLA. ON THE OTHER HAND, NGUZA SAID, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT WOULD HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH A ZAIRIAN PRESENCE IN LUANDA IF IT ENTAILED FULL RECOGNITION AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

5. COMMENT: NGUZA WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED BY NETO'S INITIATIVE, WHICH NGUZA PLACED IN CONTEXT OF ANGOLAN GOVERNMENT'S NEED TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH ITS NORTHERN NEIGHBOR IN ORDER TO FOCUS ON PROBLEMS IN THE SOUTH (E.G., UNITA'S CONTINUING GUERRILLA WARFARE, NAMIBIA). HE MADE CLEAR HIS VIEW THAT NETO IS SOMEONE WITH WHOM ZAIRE CAN DEAL USEFULLY. BUT HE MADE EQUALLY CLEAR HIS BELIEF THAT NETO IS REALLY NOT IN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION IN ANGOLA AND THEREFORE NOT IN A POSITION TO DECIDE HIMSELF THE KINDS OF ISSUES OF CONCERN TO ZAIRE. WHILE NGUZA DID NOT SAY SO EXPLICITLY, I GOT THE IMPRESSION THAT NETO MAY HAVE PRESSED HARD FOR FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AS THE BEST MEANS TO RESOLVE THOSE ISSUES. IN FACT, NGUZA TOLD ME HE HAD RECENTLY BEEN MULLING OVER THIS QUESTION, WEIGHING THE PROS AND CONS. HE SAID HE HAD NOT YET MADE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS TO PRESIDENT MOBUTU AND WOULD WANT

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 KINSHA 07127 251315Z

TO CONSULT WITH US FULLY SHOULD HE DECIDE TO DO SO. I REVIEWED OUR OWN POSITION ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA AND THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO IT. NGUZA AGREED THIS MIGHT BE SOMETHING WE COULD USEFULLY DISCUSS FURTHER DURING ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFELE'S FORTHCOMING VISIT.
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